

UNION LEAGUE CLUB

OF

NEW YORK.

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

EMIGRATION.

PRESENTED AT THE MONTHLY MEETING, HELD
MAY 12TH, 1864.

CLUB-HOUSE, UNION SQUARE,
No. 26 East Seventeenth Street,
NEW YORK.

1864.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB IN REFERENCE TO EMIGRATION.

At a regular monthly meeting of the UNION LEAGUE CLUB, of New York, held at the Club-House on Thursday, the 14th day of April, 1864, the PRESIDENT in the Chair, the following Preamble and Resolution, offered by Mr. GEORGE CABOT WARD, were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, there is reason to believe that the increasing emigration from Europe to the United States, naturally induced by the law of supply and demand, may be facilitated and rendered more beneficial to all parties by the diffusion of correct information, and by the establishment of agencies through which the various classes of employers in America may obtain the particular operatives they require, with a proper guarantee of their ability and moral character; therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of seven be appointed to consider carefully this subject in its various phases, and report their views thereon to this club at the next general meeting.

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Taylor.
The Chair appointed, as such committee, Messrs. GEORGE CABOT WARD, JOHN JAY, W. H. OSBORN, HORATIO ALLEN, W. E. DODGE, J. G. HOLBROOK, and SHERMAN J. BACON.

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At the monthly meeting of the Club, held on Thursday, the 12th of May, 1864, Mr. JAY, on behalf of the Special Committee on Emigration, presented and read a Report, whereupon Mr. DODGE offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Report of the Committee on Emigration be printed, under their direction, for the use of the members, and that the Committee be continued, and requested to advise the Club of any further suggestions on the subject which they may deem important.

Upon motion, the resolution was adopted, and the Committee was directed to print 2,500 copies of said report.



REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

The Special Committee to whom was referred a Preamble and Resolution on the subject of Emigration, beg leave respectfully to report,

That they have given the subject careful reflection, and have advised thereon with the Secretary of State, with Members of Congress, and with practical men who have been largely interested in promoting emigration for the purposes of their own business, and for the sale and settlement of Western lands.

The subject of emigration, which from the birth of our Republic has always been one of interest and importance, has become, in consequence of the Rebellion, a National question of vast magnitude, and has engaged the serious attention of the Government.

ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

The President, in his last Annual Message, submitted to Congress the expediency of establishing a system for the encouragement of emigration; referring to the great deficiency of labour in every field of industry, especially in agriculture and in our mines; to the fact that tens of

thousands of persons, destitute of means, are thronging our Foreign Consulates, anxious to emigrate to the United States if essential but very cheap assistance could be afforded them; and remarking that, under the sharp discipline of civil war, the Nation is beginning a new life, and that this noble effort demands and should receive the support of the Government.

In the House, this part of the President's Message was referred to a Special Committee, who, through its Chairman, the Hon. G. B. Washburne, has made a Report, accompanied by a suggestive and valuable letter from the Secretary of State, by another from Mr. J. M. Edmonds, Commissioner of the Land Office, and by a Bill to encourage emigration.

In the Senate, the subject of establishing a Bureau of Emigration, and the enactment of suitable laws for the encouragement and protection of emigrants, has been carefully considered by the Committee on Agriculture, who, through Mr. Sherman, of Ohio, made an elaborate and very interesting Report, also accompanied by a Bill to Encourage Emigration.

The thoroughness of the examination thus given to the subject in the State Department, and in both branches of Congress, and the careful collation of statistics bearing upon the question, entitles the conclusion reached by the Committees to great respect.

INCREASE OF EMIGRATION AND INDUCEMENTS THERETO.

The largest emigration in any one year to the United States was in 1854, when it amounted to 427,000. In 1860 it was 153,000. In 1861 there was a marked decline. The arrivals for 1862 showed an advance of 20 per cent., and those of 1863 were within an hundred of those of 1860.

The arrivals thus far in 1864 show a larger increase, and a letter from Mr. Consul Dudley at Liverpool, dated the 22d of April, to the Secretary of State, states that the emigration to the United States from that port is unprecedented, and that there are not at the present time half ships enough to carry the emigrants waiting for a passage; that he learned from two houses that all their passages were engaged to the 1st of June; and one firm stated that they could send to the States, within two months, 50,000 persons, if they had the ships to carry them.

This anxiety on the part of English subjects to link their destiny with that of our Republic, is a significant response to the loud-mouthed assurances of British orators and organs of slavery and secession, that "the bubble of democracy has burst," and that our citizens are being ground to the dust by the iron heel of a military despotism.

Similar letters, as your Committee were advised by the Secretary of State, are constantly being received from the continental consulates.

Mr. Washburne's Report, referring to the vacuum created in our labour market by the war, estimates the number of labouring men who have left their employments and gone into the field in the defence of the Republic, at nearly a million and a quarter; and to these must be added, in estimating, what will presently be the wants of the whole country, some six or eight hundred thousand men put into the field on the part of the Rebels; so that the entire loss from the Rebellion to our National industry may be estimated at from a million and a half to two millions of men. The dearth of labour thus created is severely felt, not only in our agriculture and our thousands of manufactories, but in the coal and iron mines of Pennsylvania, the coal mines of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois; in the Lead mines of Galena, and the Gold and Silver mines of California, Nevada, Idaho and Colorado; while the demand for labourers on our Railroads alone would absorb, according to Mr. Washburne, the entire emigration of 1863.

The general inducements to emigration, such as the high price of labour and the low price of food compared with other countries, our land policy, which gives to every naturalized citizen a homestead of 160 acres, the political rights which we confer so lavishly, our free school system, which confers education upon all, and gives dignity and power to the poorest citizen, these blessings and advantages, combined with the prestige of our Republic, so immensely to be increased when this Rebellion shall be suppressed,

its cause removed, and harmony restored, are now turning towards our shores many thousands for whom no ships are ready, and render it unnecessary, in the opinion of statesmen at Washington, to devise new inducements to emigration, when the throng of waiting emigrants exceeds so largely the ability to bring them.

And yet, in view of the future of America, its capabilities for supporting a population, and of the amount added by each emigrant to the wealth of the nation, the subject is one deserving of the most careful study.*

* The preliminary report of Mr. Jos. C. G. Kennedy to the Census of 1860 contains some interesting tables, showing the statistics of our foreign emigration from 1820, and approximate estimates of an earlier period. The total number of emigrants to American ports since 1820 is about five millions and a half. Mr. Kennedy assumes the emigration from Great Britain and Ireland to the United States, since the close of the war in 1814, to have been 3,500,000

By the Custom-house returns the emigration, since 1820,	
from Germany, was.	1,486,000
From France.	208,000
" British America.	117,000
" Prussia	60,000
" Switzerland	37,000
" Norway and Sweden.	36,000
" China.	41,000
" West Indies.	40,000
" Holland.	21,000
" Italy	11,000
" Spain	16,000

&c. &c., &c.

A table of the occupation of emigrants since 1820 shows that the occupations of about 3,000,000, out of a total of 5,450,000 emigrants, was not stated. Of those whose occupation was stated, there were

THE AREA, POPULATION, AND CAPABILITIES OF THE
UNITED STATES.

The Hon. Robert J. Walker, in a recent letter upon American Finances and Resources, remarks that, "if as well cultivated as England, our country could more than feed and clothe the whole world; that if as densely settled as England, our population would be more than 1200 millions, and if as densely settled as Massachusetts, among the least fertile of our States, we would number 513 millions."

Our area exceeds that of Europe, and we have greater extent of mines, especially of coal, iron, gold, silver and quicksilver—our coal alone, as stated by Sir William Armstrong, being thirty-two times as great as that of the United Kingdom; and our iron will bear a similar proportion.

Labourers	872,000
Mechanics	407,000
Farmers	764,000
Merchants	231,000
Weavers and Spinners	11,000
Mariners	29,000
Miners	39,000
Servants	21,000
Physicians	2,200
Clergymen	1,420
Lawyers	1,140
Engineers	825
&c., &c., &c.	

The females are less than the males, in the proportion of two to three, and almost precisely one half of the emigrants are between fifteen and thirty years of age.

Our coast and shore line, according to Professor Bache, is, in all, 122,784 miles, of which one-half is navigable by steam, employing an interior Steam Tonnage exceeding all the internal Steam Tonnage of the rest of the world. All Europe combined can never have such facilities for cheap water communication as belong to the United States, and this, which is a mighty element in estimating the power and progress of a nation, shows also, according to Professor Bache, why so small a portion of our land requires irrigation, and why we have no general failures of crops, and so few partial failures of any crop.*

According to the report of the Commissioner of Public Lands for 1860, the public lands embrace an area of two million and a quarter square miles, or more than two-thirds of our territorial extent. Of the part surveyed, a thousand millions of acres, or 1,600,000 square miles, exceeding half the area of the whole Union, is yet undisposed of, and this area of our public domain waiting for settlement is "thirty-two times as large as England proper"—a fact which, even assuming but half of this

* Lieut. Maury remarked, when in the service of the United States, and before he had forfeited his integrity by his treachery to the Flag: "The area of all the valleys which are drained by the rivers of Europe which empty into the Atlantic, all the valleys that are drained by the rivers of Asia which empty into the Indian Ocean, and of all the valleys that are drained by the rivers of Africa and Europe which empty into the Mediterranean, does not cover an extent of territory as great as that included in the valleys drained by the American rivers alone which discharge themselves into one central sea"—the Gulf of Mexico.

area to be fit for culture, it may not be amiss to remember when we are reminded of the fact that our National debt incurred in preserving the integrity of the Republic, and to be paid for by the generations that are to inhabit this broad land, is about one half as large as the debt of England.*

The rate at which our population has increased from 1790 to 1860, is 34.6, nearly 35 per cent., and this rate has been singularly uniform, never varying, in a single decade, more than four per cent. If we shall continue to increase at the same rate, we shall attain the density of population which exists in Europe, in the year 1925, sixty-one years from to-day; and as we now count some eighty-eight years since our National birth in 1776, it requires no stretch of imagination to look forward less than three-fourths of that period. If our ratio continues uniform, we shall number, in 1925, 217 millions.

* The *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1864, in an article on "British North America," remarks:

"Perhaps we shall somewhat surprise our readers if we inform them that one third of the United States is wholly unfitted for occupation by man."

The Rocky Mountain System, as stated by Prof. Henry, occupies one third of the entire breadth of the United States, and is, in great part, unfit for cultivation; but, excluding from consideration this one third of the total area of the United States (2,936,166 square miles), there remains 1,980,778 square miles fit for cultivation—which, as compared with the total area of Great Britain (121,912 square miles), is more than sixteen to one.

EMIGRATION AS AN ECONOMICAL QUESTION.

The question of emigration, therefore, in reference to the future, is one to which the statesmen and political economists of our country can hardly attach too great importance. Nor is the question that looms up with such immensity in the next century, without immediate importance in its bearing on our national revenue of to-day.

The Reports by the Emigrant Commissioners of the State of New York, of the average amount of capital brought into the country by European emigrants, in addition to their personal effects, assisted to account for the almost startling rapidity in the increase of the personal property of the nation, as exhibited by successive censuses.

But apart from the gold and silver brought in the pockets of the emigrants, especially of those from Germany and Northern Europe, it is to be remembered that every man contributes, by his productive labour, to the National wealth, and that each individual, under our present system of taxes, contributes directly to the National Treasury a per centage on a part of the food that he eats, the tea, coffee and whisky that he drinks, the tobacco that he uses, and the clothes that he wears.

What may be a correct estimate of these two items, the pecuniary value of the labour of the emigrant to the State, and his average contribution in direct taxes, is a question of no small interest. But adopting the very low estimate that each man on an average adds \$100 a year to

the National wealth, and \$10 a year to the National Treasury, it becomes clear that the National Government, looking upon the matter simply in a pecuniary point of view, could make no better nor surer investment, than in importing emigrants at the National cost, whose labour would directly or indirectly restore the advance fourfold.

PROVISIONS OF MR. WASHBURN'S BILL.

Such a step, however, at this moment, whatever its advantages, would be regarded with jealousy by the European Powers, and might lead to international complications;* and the Bill reported by Mr. Washburne,

* So far as agricultural emigrants are concerned, and in reference to the food question, Great Britain and France, as their political economists have already discovered, are even more interested than ourselves in the growth of our rural population. The fact can no longer be ignored that, in Western Europe, consumption has long since overtaken and is now fast gaining on production, and that their people must henceforth look to the United States for *bread*, to prevent such catastrophes as the Irish famine of 1847, when half a million are said to have died of starvation. On this subject, a remark of that high authority, Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his "Political Economy," is eminently suggestive:

"The principal fund at present available for supplying the country with a yearly importation of food is that portion of the annual savings of America which has hitherto been applied to increasing the manufacturing establishments of the United States, and which may now, possibly, be diverted from that purpose to growing food for our market. This limited source of supply, unless great improvements are made in agriculture, cannot keep pace with the growing demands of so rapidly increasing a population as that of Great Britain; and if our population and capital continue to increase with their present rapidity, the only mode in which food can continue to be supplied cheaply to the one is by sending the other abroad to produce it."—(London, 1848, 2d edit., 2d vol., pp. 297, 8.)

These words, written some sixteen years ago, apart from their imme-

which is modeled upon one prepared by the State Department, cautiously avoids all effort at assisting the foreign emigrant until after his arrival on our shores. Its features are briefly these :

1. It appoints a Commissioner of Emigration in the State Department, to serve for four years, with a salary of \$2,500, and three clerks.

2. It provides that all contracts made by emigrants to the United States, in foreign countries, in conformity to regulations established by the Commissioner, pledging their labour for a term not exceeding one year, to repay the expenses of the emigration, may be enforced in our courts, and shall be a lien on any land to be thereafter acquired by the emigrant.

3. It authorizes the Secretary of State to reduce the tonnage duty on Emigrant ships.

4. It provides that no emigrant shall be compulsively enrolled for military service during the existing insurrection.

5. That there shall be an U. S. Emigrant Office in New York, with a superintendent and two clerks, author-

diate bearing upon the subject of emigration, are noteworthy, as exhibiting the direct and deep interest which the masses of the English people have, and which they seem instinctively to recognize, in the preservation of our National peace and prosperity—not alone as regards the favouring influence of the American Republic upon British Reform and their own political and social elevation, but in reference to the yet more important question of their daily food.

ized to make contracts for the transportation of emigrants, in the cheapest and most expeditious mode, to the place of their destination, and to protect them from imposition.

6. That the Superintendent may make advances, for the purposes of transportation, upon the baggage or effects of the Emigrant.

7. It forbids the employment of any person, under the Act, who may be interested in land or transportation companies.

8. It requires the Commissioner to submit a detailed Annual Report to Congress, and

9. It appropriates \$25,000 for carrying the provisions of the act into effect.

The passage of this Act will be a decided advance in the action of Government touching Emigration, and will open the way for such additional provisions, in the future, as may be found expedient on reviewing the details of the last year's emigration; and in view of the reluctance entertained by the Government, pending our domestic embarrassments, to take unnecessarily any step which may be turned into an occasion of foreign quarrel, the country will hail the passage of the Act of Mr. Washburne as affording some advantage for the present, and as preparing the way for more efficient action in the future.

The provisions of the act (embodied at the suggestion of Mr. Seward) for securing the re-payment by the emigrant of moneys advanced for his passage, meet, to a

certain extent, the point specially designated in the Preamble to the Resolution under which your Committee were appointed, touching the possibility of arrangements by which the various classes of employers in America may obtain the particular labour they employ.

How far the contracts proposed by the act, recognizable in our courts, and acting as a lien upon lands, may be available to secure advances, is yet to be tested.

CONCLUSION.

But your Committee are satisfied, from a prolonged and careful investigation of the results of various experiments in the importation of skilled labourers in different branches of manufacture, that the parties here making the advances have found insuperable difficulties, arising sometimes from one cause and sometimes from another, to the satisfactory fulfillment of the engagements.

The idea that has occasionally prevailed among our skilled labourers, that either special or general emigration is likely to interfere with the wages or interests of those already here, is one which, however natural it may seem, is contradicted by the vastness of our country and the magnitude of its needs.

The Committee rejoice to believe that the leading statesmen of this country are deeply impressed with the vital importance of protecting and stimulating its resources to their utmost extent. During the civil wars of European

states, those men who have left in the National annals the most ineffaceable records were those who, amid the commotions of war, laid the broadest foundations for a revival of national prosperity, by comprehensive measures of civil policy, in promoting manufactures and developing agricultural and mineral wealth.

The entire subject of Emigration, whether in its relation to private enterprise or public works, to its development of our resources, the payment of our taxes, the increase of our wealth, or the preservation and increase of our power, is one that will henceforth deserve the most thoughtful study at the hands of the economists and statesmen of our Republic.

The Committee do not deem it expedient at this moment to propose, for the adoption of the Club, any special recommendations going beyond the legislative provisions proposed by Congress. The establishment of an Emigration Bureau in this city will probably open opportunities for devising improvements in the system; and the Government will, perhaps, soon feel at liberty to consult more exclusively, in this respect, the interests and preferences of the American people—always, of course, with a profound regard to the mutual obligations of international justice and international courtesy, but with a less ready yielding to the wishes or intimations of European Powers. Such a deference to those Powers, at the present time, is hardly based upon any approval of their objections, but rather

upon the fact that we are sufficiently occupied for the moment in vindicating the right of Republican government, and disposing permanently of a domestic embarrassment, and upon the conviction that, with the near prospect of the restoration of our National quiet, with tenfold of our former National power, it will be more convenient to postpone for a brief season the discussion and settlement of foreign questions, however interesting or important.

NEW YORK, MAY 12, 1864.

GEO. CABOT WARD,

JOHN JAY,

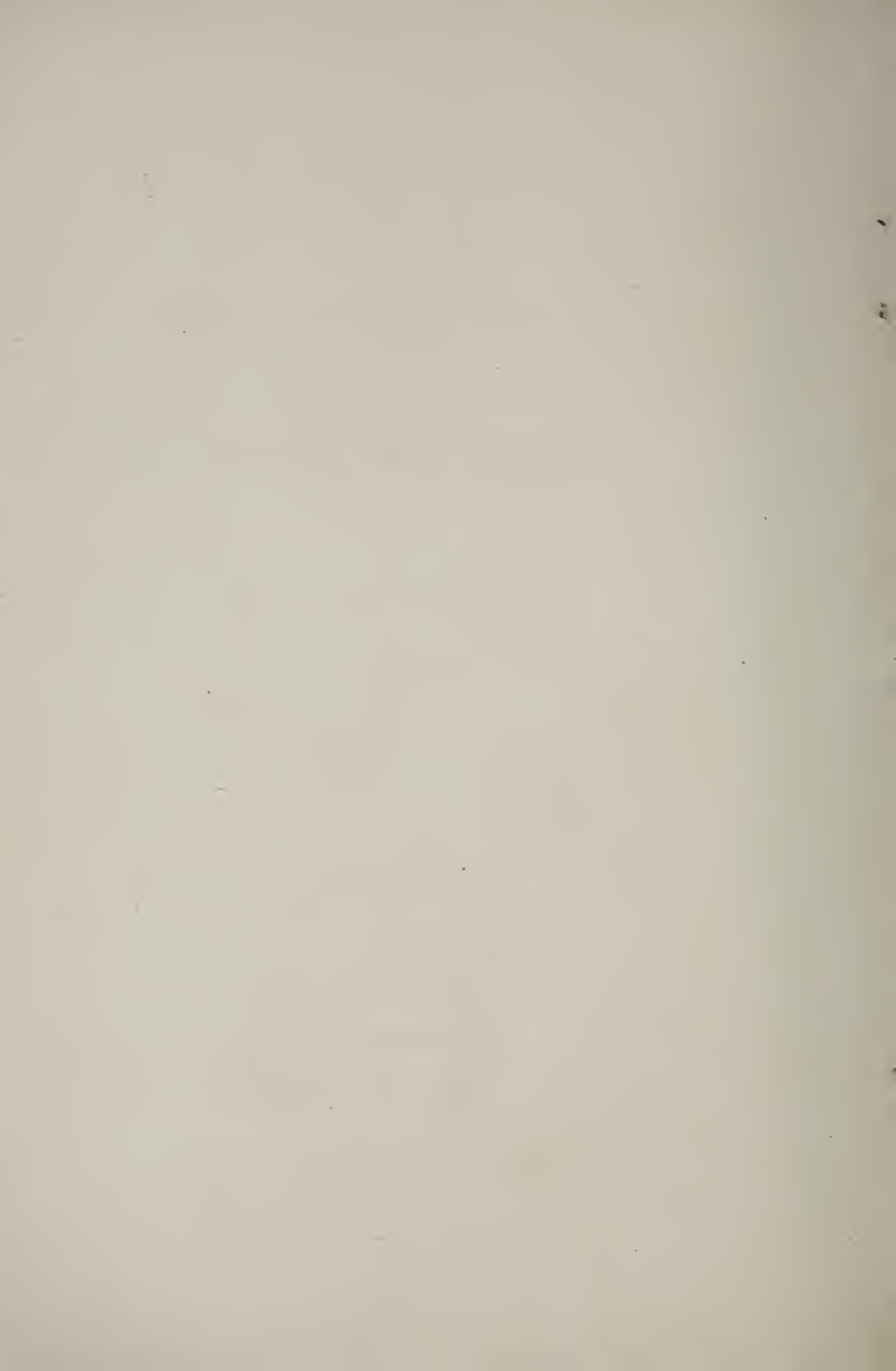
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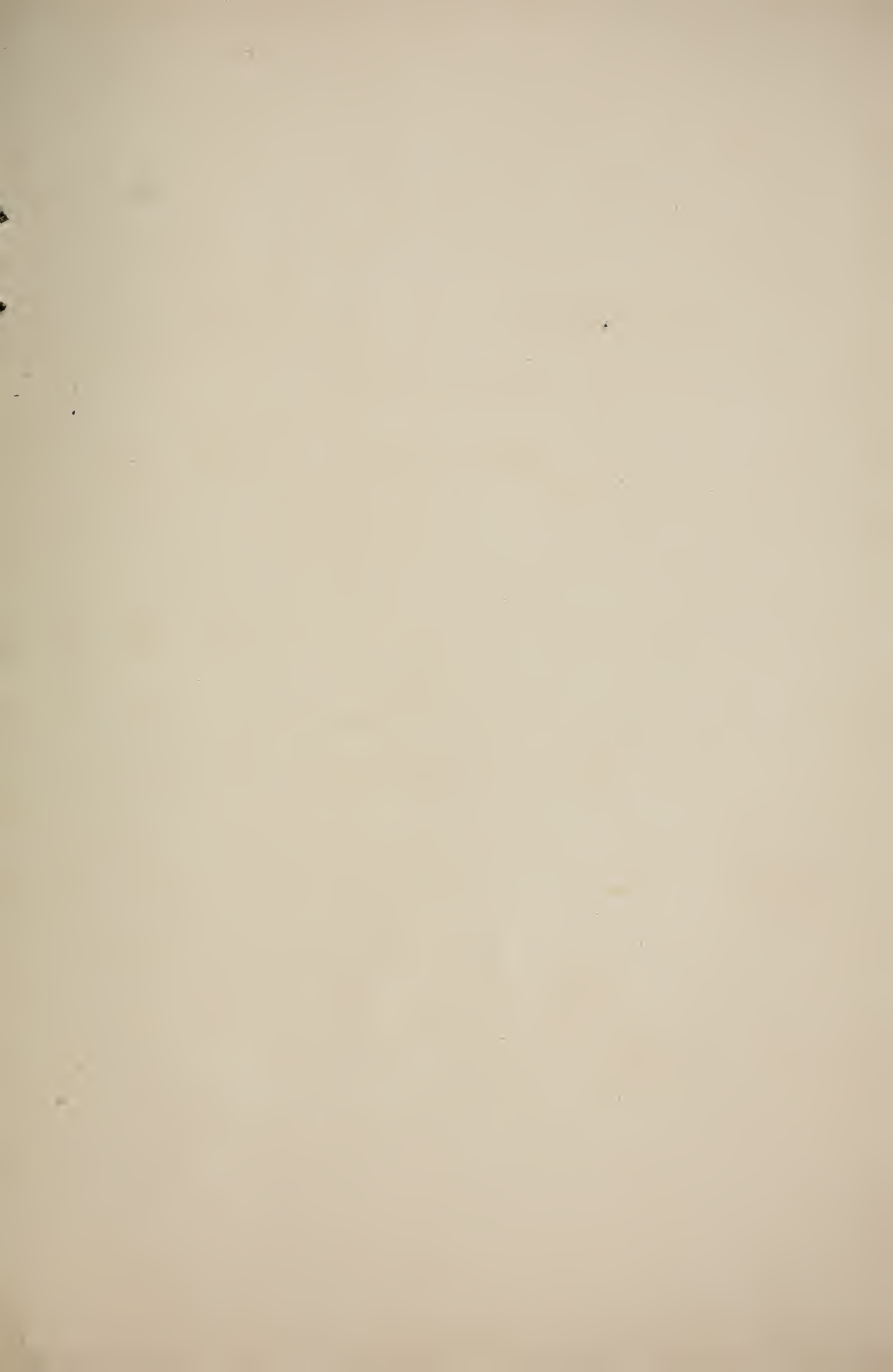
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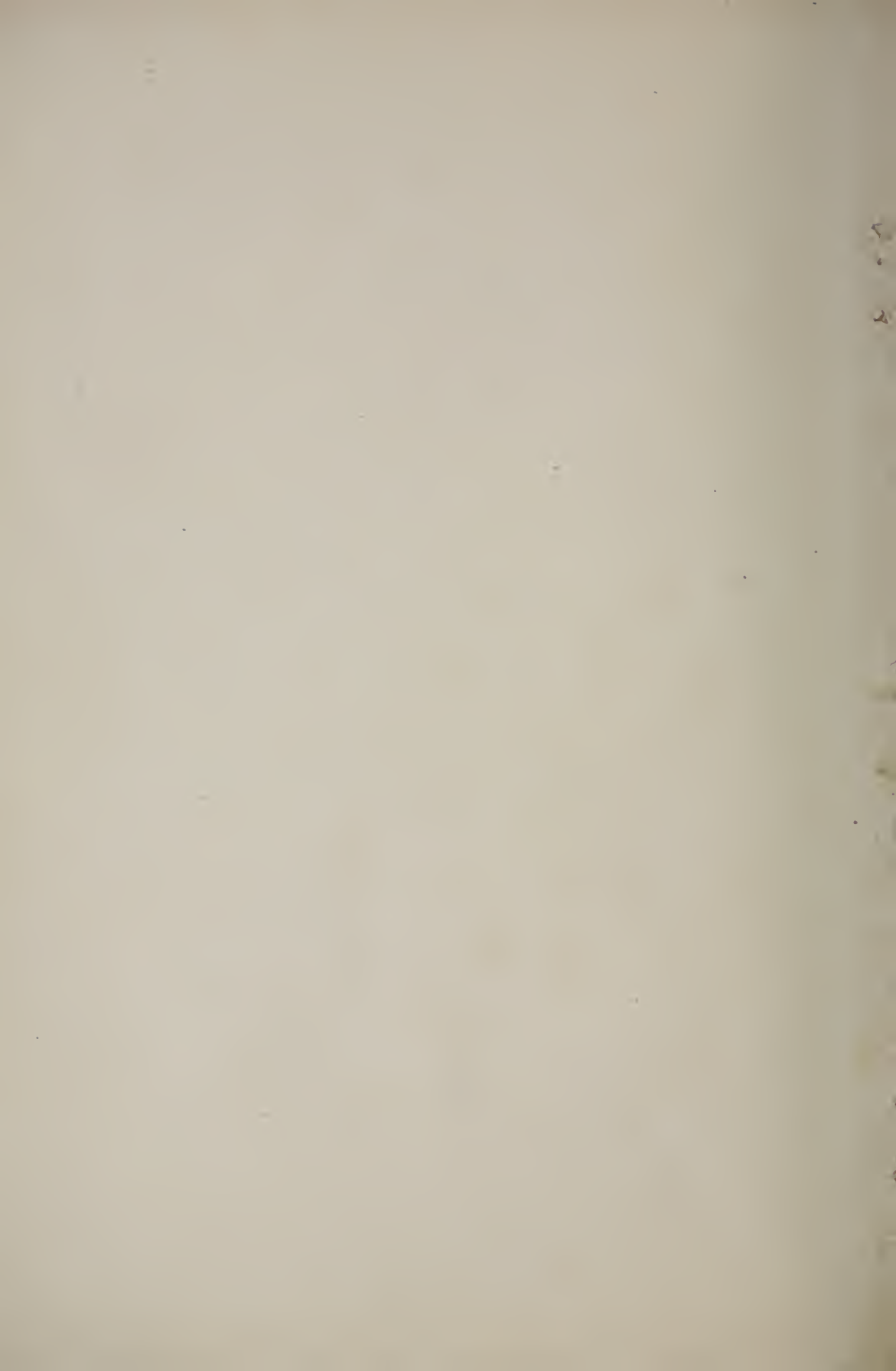
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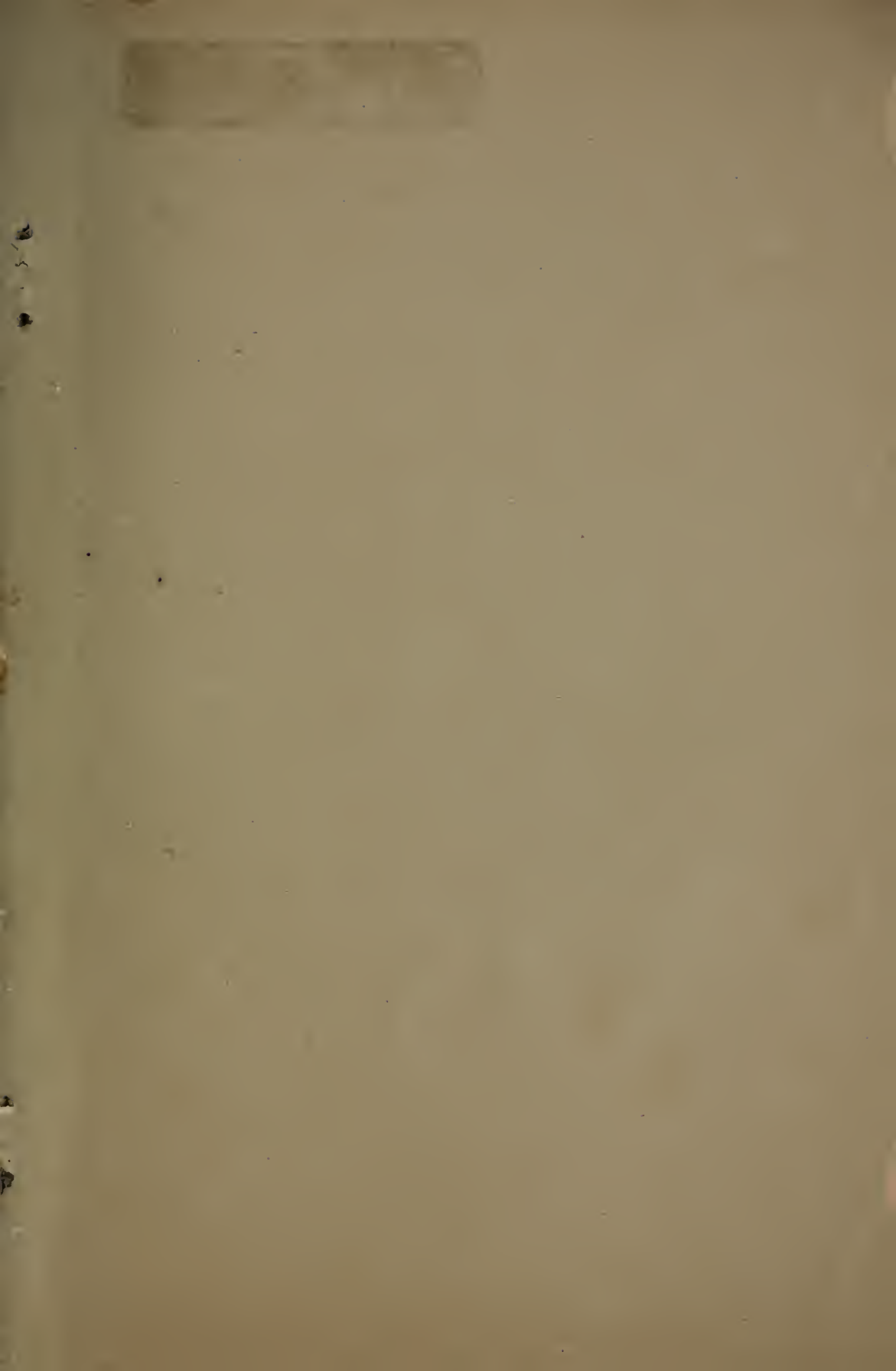
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